

The Preliminary Study of Religiosity and Quality of Life among the Elderly in Penang, Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

Elderly is defined as individuals who are aged 60 and above according to the United Nations. The population of Malaysian elderly will be accounted for 10% by 2020 under the influence of global ageing phenomenon. Yet, long life expectancy does not associate with good quality of life. Quality of life is the subjective evaluation of an individual on life position in relation to own expectations, goals, standards, and concerns. Research showed high religiosity associates with good quality of life. However, studies on religion are predominately in western countries. The role of religion may vary in different cultures. This study examined the predictive role of religiosity (organisational religiosity activities, non-organisational religious activities, and intrinsic religiosity) on the quality of life among the elderly. Cross-sectional study and survey were employed into this study. The survey instruments are the World Health Organization Quality of Life- Old module (WHOQOL-OLD) and Duke University Religion Index (DUREL). Linear regression was used to examine the data according to the study objective. This study recruited 50 participants from aged 60 to 84 who are staying in Penang, Malaysia. Penang is populated with diverse religions and cultures. The result showed only non-organisational religious activities (private religion activities) was significantly predicting the quality of life among the elderly. The findings provide an intervention reference for policy makers and healthy ageing related researchers, which is to employ religiosity on improving the quality of life among elderly.